

THE FLU SEASON IS HERE

An annual flu shot is recommended for:

- People 50 years of age or older
- People who have long-term health problems such as: heart disease, kidney disease, lung disease, asthma, and metabolic diseases like diabetes, anemia, and other blood disorders.
- People with a weakened immune system
- People 6 months to 18 yrs of age on long term aspirin treatment
- Pregnant women who will be past the 3rd month of pregnancy during the flu season (November – March)
- Healthcare workers, out-of-home caretakers, and people who travel
- **Infants 6 - 24 months of age**
- **Caregivers** of infants less than 6 months of age
- **Anyone else who wants to reduce his or her chance of catching influenza.**

Viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs cause the flu also known as influenza. The flu usually spreads through the air from person to person when a person coughs, sneezes, or talks. It can cause fever, sore throat, chills, cough, headache, and muscle aches.

Anyone can get the flu. Unlike the common cold, the flu causes severe illness and can be life threatening. Each year over 114,000 people are hospitalized and over 36,000 people in the U.S. die from complications of the flu. **Influenza and its complication are the 6th leading cause of death among children 4 yrs old and younger.**

Influenza vaccine can prevent influenza. Inactivated (killed) influenza vaccine has been used in the U.S. for many years. Influenza viruses change often therefore; influenza vaccine is updated every year. Protection develops about two weeks after getting the shot and may last up to a year.

For any questions regarding the vaccine, call the Immunization Clinic at 624-4643 or contact your Primary Care Physician.